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DIALOGUE

Between a

Blind Man and Death.

Containing Consolations for the pious Christian, against the fears of that King of Terrors.

O Death, where is thy sting? O Grave where is thy Victory. 1 Cor. xv. 55.

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BRITISH MUSEUM

A DIALOGUE, &c.

Blind-Man.

THE more men ſee, the leſs they do enquire,
The leſs they ſee, the more they do deſire;
Others to grant what blindneſs cannot give,
And for intelligence grow inquiſitive;
They aſk to be inform'd who cannot ſee,
I knowt't by ſad experience, Woe is me!
Death. Where are you, ſir? what ſitting all alone,
I did ſuppoſe 'twas you, by that ſad moan;
Coming this way to gather what's my due,
I thought it not amiſs to call on you.
B. I do not know that voice, 'tis ſure ſome ſtranger,
And by his words he ſeems to bode me danger.
D. You gueſs aright, ſir, and before you go,
I'll make you know me, whether you will or no.
B. Why what are you? pray tell me what's your Name,
And what's your buſineſs, and from whence you came.
D. I will declare what no man can deny,
There's none ſo great a Traveller as I:
Yet you muſt know, I am a wandering rover,
For my dominion lies the world all over;
I march through Court & Country, Town & City,
I know not how to ſpare, nor how to pity;
The higheſt Cedar, and the loweſt Flower,
Sooner or later do both feel my power;
The mightieſt Emperors do ſubmit to me,
Nor is the pooreſt tattered beggar free:

In peace I glean here one, and there another;
Sometimes I ſweep whole Streets away together;
In time of war, thus much I can divine,
Whoever get's the Day the triumph's mine.
I am indeed a very great commander,
'Twas I that conquer'd the great Alexander:
And after all the Victories he won,
Compell'd him to confeſs he was a Man;
Were you Goliath great, or Sampſon ſtrong,
Were you as wiſe, as rich as Solomon;
Were you as Neſtor old, as Infant young,
Had you the faireſt cheek, the ſweeteſt tongue,
Yet you muſt ſtoop, all this will nought avail,
For my Arreſts will not admit of Bail;
For to deal plainly, Sir, my Name is Death,
And 'tis my buſineſs to demand your breath.

B. My breath and life ſhall both go out together,

D. And on that errand 'twas that I came hither,
I'll have both Breath and Life without delay,
You muſt and ſhall diſpatch, come, come away.

B. What need ſuch poſting haſte? pray change your minds
'Tis a poor Conqueſt to ſurprize the Blind.

D. You may not call it poſting, nor ſurpriſe,
For you had warning when you loſt your Eyes;
Nor cou'd you hope your houſe cou'd long be free,
After the windows were poſſeſs'd by me.

B. But life is ſweet; who wou'd not if he might,
Have a long day before he bids good-night;
O ſpare me yet a while, ſlight not my Tears,

D. Hard hearts and hungry bellies, have no ears.

B. I am not yet quite ready for the Table.

D. All's one to me, I am Inexorable.

B. Yet by your favour may I ſtep aſide,
D. Be not deceiv'd, it is in vain to hide;
My forces are diſpers'd through all places,
And act for me without reſpect of faces;
I have a thouſand ways to ſhorten Life,
Beſides a Rapier, Piſtol, Sword, and Knife:
A Fly, a Hair, the ſplinter of a Thorn,
A little Scratch, the cutting of a Corn;
Have ſometimes done my buſineſs heretofore,
So to the full, that I need wiſh no more;
Should all theſe fail, enough of humours black,
Within your body, Sir, to do your work,
B. Well then, let ſome run for my Phyſician,
Tell him, I want his aid in this condition.
D. Run Boy, and fetch him, call the whole College do,
For I intend to have them too;
I value not their Potions, nor their Pills,
Nor all the Cordials in their Doctors bill;
When my time's come, let them do what they can
I'll have my due ſo vain a thing is man;
Should Galen and Hypocrates both join,
And Paracelſus too, with them combine;
Let them all meet to countermine my ſtrength,
Yet ſhall they be my priſ'ners all at length;
I grant that men of learning, worth, and art,
May have the better of me at the ſtart,
But in long running they'll give out and tire,
And quit the field, and leave me my deſire:
As for thoſe Quacks who threaten to undo me,
They are my Friends, & ſpeed ſome patients to me
B. Well, If I muſt, I will yield you the day,
'Tis ſo Enacted, and I muſt obey;

Henceforth I'll count myself among your doctors,
For this I see the measures of my betters;
But tell me now, when did your powers commence
D. My power began from Adam's first Offence;
B. From Adam's first Offence? O base beginning
Whose very first Original was sinning.
D. My very rising did from Adam's fall begin,
And ever since my strength and sting from sin.
B. To know where in the enemy's strength doth
In my conceit, is half the victory; [lye,
Have you Commission now for what you do?
D. I have Commission, what's all this to you?
B. Yes: very much, for now I understand,
I am not altogether at your Command;
My life's at his who gave you your Commission,
To him therefore I'll go with my Petition;
I'll seek his Love, and on his Mercy trust.
And when my sins are pardon'd, do your worst,
D. That you may know how far my Power extends,
I will divorce you from your dearest friends:
You shall resign your Jewels, Money, Plate,
Your earthly joys shall all be out of date;
I will deprive you of all your dainty fare,
I'll strip you to the skin, naked and bare;
Linen or Woolen, you shall have to wind you;
As for the rest, all must be left behind you;
Bound hand and feet, I'll bring you to my den,
Where constant dreadful darkness reigns, and then
Your only dwelling house shall be a Cave,
Your lodging room a little narrow Grave;
A Chest your Closet, and a Sheet your dress,
And your Companions worms, and rottenness.

B. If this be all the miſchief you can do,
Your harbingers deſerve more dread than you;
Diſeaſes are your harbingers I'm ſure,
Many of which 'tis grievous to endure:
But when once dead, I ſhall not then complain,
Of cold or hunger, poverty or pain.

D. There's one thing more which to mind we call,
When once I come, then come I once for all:
And when my ſtroke doth Soul and Body ſever,
What's left undone, muſt be undone for ever.

B. That's a great truth, & I have learn'd to know
That there's no working in the Grave below;
To be before-hand therefore will I cry,
That then I may have nought to do but die.
But tell me Sir, do all men die alike,

D, To me they do, for whom God bids I ſtrike
Look how the fooliſh die, ſo die the wiſe,
As do the righteous, ſo the ſinner dies
The greateſt difference will appear hereafter,
But that's a thing that is beyond my Charter;
That I to ſome prove better to ſome worſe,
To ſome a Bleſſing, and to ſome a Curſe;
That's none of mine, I may not undertake it,
'Tis God's appointment, and men's works that make it:
Hence 'tis that ſinners troubles never ceaſe,
And that the upright man his end is peace.

B. There now remains but only one thing more,
Will not your power be one day out of door.

D. Muſt I needs tell you Sir? 'tis certain true,
There is a death for me as well as you;
And mine is worſe, for I muſt die for ever,
You may riſe again, but I ſhall never.

B. By all that hath been ſaid now I do ſee,
You had no need to've been ſo rough with me.
D. Come let that paſs, the kinder to appear,
I will reveal a ſecret in your Ear;
All in his hair the ſtrenth of Sampſon lay,
All with his hair went Sampſon's ſtrength away:
I have no ſtrength but what I had from ſin,
I have no ſting but what lies hid therein;
Chriſt ſuffering death to put this ſin away,
Hath made me his whom I ſuppos'd my prey:
My ſtrength is now decay'd my ſting abated,
My boldneſs check'd, and my dominion mated;
And I am now both faint and feeble grown,
Much like Sampſon when his hair was gone;
In my own craft I was compleatly routed,
My jaws were broken, and my holders outed:
What now I catch, I have no power to keep,
My very name is chang'd from death to ſleep:
'Tis true I ſeiz'd on Chriſt, and brought him down
And bound him in a priſon of my own;
But all my ſtrongeſt doors, bars, bolts and bands,
Were but mere nothings in his mighty hands;
He broke through all, and left my doors wide open,
And all his ſervants priſoners of hope:
For though they die, yet with devout affection,
They do expreſs a joyful reſurrection;
And with their maſter to be brought again,
That they with him for ever may remain;
Thus Chriſt by dying did become Victorious,
And from his bed of darkneſs roſe more glorious;
And I by binding him made myſelf faſt,
And his I know will prove my death at laſt.

B. These words give comfort and Instruction too;
Henceforth I shall be better pleas'd with you;
Decreed it is for all men once to die;
After that Judgment, then Eternity;
To prayer therefore will I join Endeavour;
So to live here, that I may live for ever;
And seeing they that have and keep Christ's words;
Whether they live or die be all the Lords:
Repentance, Faith, and new obedience shall,
Fit and prepare me for my funeral;
From whence I trust my Saviour will translate me;
In season due, from the reach of those that hate me;
Even to that place of Life and Glory too,
Where neither Death nor Sin hath ought to do;
That hope in me that word doth cherish,
He that believes in me shall never perish;
Now welcome death upon my Saviour's score,
Who wou'd not die to live for evermore.

D. Sir, I perceive you speak not without reason,
I'll leave you now, and call some other season.

B. Call when you please, I will await that call,
And whilst I stand, make ready for my fall;
In the mean time my constant prayer shall be,
From Sudden and from Endless Death, Good Lord deliver me;
Judge not of death by sense least you mistake it,
Death's neither friend nor foe but as you make it;
Live as you should, you need not to complain,
For where to live is Christ, to die is gain.

FINIS.

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